

END OF 'IMAD-UD-DIN MUHAMMAD IBN QĀSIM, THE ARAB CONQUEROR OF SIND

INTRODUCTORY

THERE are two conflicting and contradictory accounts of the circumstances that led to the dismissal and death of 'Imād-ud-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Qāsim, the Arab Conqueror of Sind. One of these accounts is based on the authority of the *Chach-Nāma*, which is relied upon by Mīr Muḥammad Ma'sūm of Bhakkar in his *Tārikh-us-Sind*, also called *Tārikh-i-Ma'sūmī* after his name, and other subsequent writers. It is also frequently repeated by European writers and is widely in vogue. The source of the other account, which is less current, is the *Futūh-ul-Buldān* of Ahmad ibn Yahyā ibn Jābir al-Balādhurī; while the author of the *Chach-Nāma* and his followers hold the Khalifa Walid ibn 'Abdul-Malik responsible for the unjust and unmerited dismissal and death of the hero of Sind, Balādhurī and his followers throw the entire onus of the blame on his brother and successor, Sulaimān ibn 'Abdul-Malik, and attribute the perpetration of the tragedy to a different motive. Now these two accounts are so divergent and indeed diametrically opposite that it is impossible to reconcile them. One of them must be wrong and it is for us to find out which is correct. In this article I propose to examine both these accounts as critically, and yet as briefly, as possible, with a view to ascertaining the truth. For the sake of clarity and convenience I shall first take up the relevant passages from the rival accounts *seriatim*, discuss their origin, antiquity, and authenticity, criticise their contents, point out the probabilities and improbabilities of the rival stories, and then sum up the whole case and express my own opinion at the end.

STORY IN THE CHACH-NĀMA

THE story, as it appears in the *Chach-Nāma*, is as follows :—

“ Orders from the Capital to Muḥammad ibn Qāsim.

“ The next day, when the king of the heavenly host showed his face to the world from behind the veil of night, a dromedary rider, with

orders from the seat of government, arrived. Muhammad son of 'Ali Abul-Hasan Hamadhāni says that when Rāi Dāhir was killed, his two virgin daughters were seized in his palace, and Muhammad ibn Qāsim had sent them to Baghdaḍ under the care of his negro slaves.¹ The Khalifa of the time sent them into his harem to be taken care of for a few days till they were fit to be presented to him. After some time, the remembrance of them recurred to the noble mind of the Khalifa and he ordered them both to be brought before him at night. Walid ibn 'Abd-ul-Malik told the interpreter to enquire from them which of them was the eldest, that he might retain her by him, and call the other sister at another time. The interpreter first asked their names. The eldest said, 'My name is Suryādeo,' and the youngest replied, 'My name is Parmaldeo.' He called the eldest to him, and the youngest he sent back to be taken care of. When he had made the former sit down, and she uncovered her face, the Khalifa of the time looked at her, and was enamoured of her surpassing beauty and charms. Her powerful glances robbed his heart of patience. He laid his hand upon Suryādeo and drew her towards him. But Suryādeo stood up, and said 'Long live the king! I am not worthy of the king's bed, because the just Commander 'Imād-ud-Dīn Muhammād ibn Qāsim kept us three days near himself before he sent us to the royal residence. Perhaps it is a custom among you; but such ignominy should not be suffered by kings.' The Khalifa was overwhelmed with love, and the reins of patience had fallen from his hand. Through indignation he could not stop to scrutinise the matter. He asked for ink and paper, and commenced to write a letter with his own hand, commanding that at whatever place Muhammad (ibn) Qāsim had arrived, he should suffer himself to be sewn up in a hide and sent to the capital.

"Muhammad ibn Qāsim reaches Udhāfar, and receives the Order from the Khalifa's Capital.

"When Muhammad (ibn) Qāsim received the letter at Udhāfar,² he gave the order to his people and they sewed him up in a hide, put him in a chest, and sent him back. Muhammad ibn Qāsim thus delivered his soul to God. The officers who were appointed to the different places remained at their stations, while he was taken in the chest to the Khalifa of the time. The private chamberlain reported to Walid 'Abd-ul-

1. The preceding day 'Imād-ud-Dīn Muhammad ibn Qāsim was exhorting his soldiers against Rāi Har Chandar of Kanauj at Udhāfar. (Elliot & Dawson, Vol. I, pp. 208-09).

2. Variants: اودھا فر ' او دھا فر ' او دھا فر ' (Kilich Beg's Trans. of the *Chach-Nāmah*, p. 192).

Raverty identifies it with Udaipur, 14 miles south of Alwāna on the Ghaggar, and he is followed by Haig in the *Cambridge History of India*, iii, 7. Mir Ma'sūm converts it into Jepalpur, but his authority on this point is negligible. The reading of the passage is uncertain and I have not been able to determine the exact situation of the place.

Malik, son of Marwān, that Muhammad ibn Qāsim Thaqafī had been brought to the capital. The Khalifa asked whether he was alive or dead. It was replied, ' May the Khalifa's life, prosperity and honour be prolonged to eternity, when the royal mandates were received in the city of Udhāfar, Muhammad ibn Qāsim immediately, according to the orders, had himself sewn up in a raw hide, and after two days delivered his soul to God and went to the eternal world. The authorities whom he had placed at different stations maintain the country in their possession, the Khutba continued to be read in the name of the Khalifa, and they used their best endeavours to establish their supremacy.'

The Khalifa Opens the Chest.

" The Khalifa then opened the chest and called the girls into his presence. He had a green bunch of myrtle in his hand, and pointing with it towards the face of the corpse, said, ' See, my daughters, how my commands, which are sent to my agents are observed and obeyed by all. When these my orders reached Kanauj,¹ he sacrificed his precious life at my command.'

" The Address of Jānkī, daughter of Dāhir, to Khalifa ' Abd-ul-Malik, son of Marwān.

" Then the virtuous Jānkī² put off the veil from her face, placed her head on the ground, and said, ' May the king live long, may his prosperity and glory increase for many years ; and may he be adorned with perfect wisdom. It is proper that a king should test with the touchstone of reason and weigh in his mind whatever he hears from friend or foe, and when it is found to be true and indubitable, then orders compatible with justice should be given. By so doing he will not fall under the wrath of God, nor be condemned by the tongue of man. Your orders have been obeyed, but your gracious mind is wanting in reason and judgment. Muhammad ibn Qāsim respected our honour and behaved like a brother or son to us, and he never touched us, your slaves, with a licentious hand. But he had killed the king of Hind and Sind, he had destroyed the dominion of our forefathers, and he had degraded us from the dignity of royalty to a state of slavery. Therefore, to retaliate and revenge these injuries, we uttered a falsehood before the Khalifa,

1. This is not to be confused with its more famous name-sake situated in Central India. (E. & D., Vol. I, p. 207). [For a learned discussion on the subject cf. *Islamic Culture*, October, 1943, Sulaimān Nadwi's article.— Ed. I.C.].

2. " This is a different name from that which she gave herself, when first asked." (E. & D., Vol. I, p. 210, f. n. 2).

and our object has been fulfilled. Through this fabrication and deceit have we taken our revenge. Had the Khalifa not passed such peremptory orders, had he not lost his reason through the violence of his passion, and had he considered it proper to investigate the matter, he would not have subjected himself to this repentance and reproach; and had Muhammad ibn Qāsim, assisted by his wisdom, come to within one day's journey from this place, and then had himself put into a hide, he would have been liberated after inquiry, and would not have died.' The Khalifa was very sorry at this explanation, and from excess of regret he bit the back of his hand.

"*Jānkī Again Addresses the Khalīfa.*

"Jānkī again opened her lips and looked at the Khalīfa. She perceived that his anger was much excited, and she said, 'The king has committed a very grievous mistake, for he ought not, on account of two slave girls, to have destroyed a person who had taken captive a hundred thousand modest women like us, who had brought down seventy chiefs who ruled over Hind and Sind from their thrones to their coffins; and who instead of temples had erected mosques, pulpits, and minarets. If Muhammad ibn Qāsim had been guilty of any little neglect or impropriety, he ought not to have been destroyed on the mere word of a designing person.' The Khalīfa ordered both the sisters to be enclosed between walls. From that time to this day the flags of Islām have been more and more exalted everyday, and are still advancing."¹

ANTIQUITY OF THE CHACH-NĀMA

LET us first consider the antiquity of the work on which the above account is based. The *Chach-Nāma*, in which the romantic story first appears, is one of the earliest Arabic histories of Sind. It gives a fairly detailed account of the usurpation of the Brahman, Chach, after whose name the book is called, and the Arab conquest of Sind. In the introduction as well as in the epilogue to the work it is called *Fath-Nāma*, i.e., a book of conquest or a despatch announcing victory. In some books it is referred to as *Tārikh-i-Hind-wa-Sind* and is freely quoted by later writers, as for example, by Mir Muhammad Ma'sūm in his *Tārikh-i-Ma'sūmī*, by Nūr-ul-Haq in his *Dhubdat-ut-Tawārīkh*, by Nīzāmud-Dīn Ahmad in his *Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī*, and by Abul-Qāsim Firishta in his *Gulshan-i-Ibrāhīmī*, commonly called *Tārikh-i-Firishta*. In the *Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī* it is mentioned as *Minhāj-ul-Masālik*. It is, as we have it, a translation, the Arabic original of which is lost with little hope of recovery.²

1. *E. & D.*, pp. 209-211.

2. I am indebted to Sir Henry Elliot for the information embodied in this paragraph. (*E. & D.*, Vol. I, p. 131).

Its antiquity is evident from the following facts:—

(1) It was translated from the Arabic original by Muhammad 'Ali ibn Hamid ibn Abi-Bakr Kufi in the reign of Nasir-ud-Din Qabaiqa in the beginning of the seventh century after the Hijrat, and dedicated to Sadr-i-Jahān Dastur-i-Sāhib Qirān 'Ain-ul-Mulk Husain ibn Abi-Bakr ibn Muhammad al-Ash'ari, the minister of Nasir-ud-Din Qabaiqa.¹

(2) When in his search for material the translator named above reached Alor and Bhakkar, he saw Maulana Qadi Isma'il ibn Muhammad ibn Musa ibn Ta'i ibn Ya'qub ibn Ta'i ibn Musa ibn Muhammad ibn Shaiban ibn 'Uthman Thaqafi and obtained from him a book in Arabic embodying an excellent account of the Arab conquest of Sind, which, according to its owner, had descended to him from his ancestors who had been participants in the events and advantages of the conquest.²

(3) Such important geographical places as Manṣūra, Maswāhi, Manjabābāri, Annāri or al-Baiza, etc., which were subsequently noticed by al-Balādhūri, Ibn-Hauqal and others, do not find place anywhere in the *Chach-Namā*. This evidently shows that the original work was written before these places had come into existence. As Manṣūra was founded in the beginning of the Khilafat of al-Manṣūr, who ascended the throne in 136 A.H. (753 A.C.), we can safely conclude that the work must have been composed before that time, otherwise the author of the *Chach-Namā* would not have left the place unnoticed.³

(4) The book (*Chach-Namā*) teems with references to Buddhists, Buddhist monks and Buddhist temples, and it becomes obvious to the reader that the bulk of the Sindian population of the time consisted of Buddhists. As Buddhism lost its hold on India soon after the conquest of Sind by the Arabs, it is reasonable to say that the book was written not long after that conquest was completed.

(5) In the *Chach-Namā* we come across Samānis, monks and a royal white elephant, which are conspicuous by their absence in the accounts of the later invasions of Sind by Sultān Maḥmūd of Ghaznī. This again points to the antiquity of the work.

(6) Finally, some portions of the book are based on oral testimony received at second, third, or even fourth hand from those who were participants in the transactions recorded. It is indeed unfortunate that Tabari,⁴ who wrote in the third century after the Hijrat, tracing all his traditions to eye or ear witnesses, had no knowledge of the *Chach-Namā*, and this is perhaps the reason why his account of the Arab conquest of Sind is so meagre.

1. *E. & D.*, pp. 131. He was at first the Vizier of Nasir-uddin-Qabaiqa and later served under Iltutmish as Vizier of Prince Rukn-ud-Din Firuz when the latter was appointed Governor of Badaon. (*Vide Tabqat-i Nasiri*, 172-73 and 181-82, and *E. & D.*, Vol. I, pp. 325 and 330).

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 132.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 136.

4. His full name is Abū-Ja'far ibn Jarir ibn Yazid at-Tabari.

AUTHENTICITY

MORE important from our point of view than the antiquity of the work is the authenticity of its contents. This is amply evident from the close resemblance between the ancestry of Ismā'il, the owner of the original Arabic, who himself participated in the events and advantages of the conquest and that of Mūsa ibn Ya'qūb ibn Tā'i ibn Muḥammad ibn Shaibān ibn 'Uthmān, the first Qādī of Alor appointed by the conqueror, though in the latter case some important links are missing and were perhaps deliberately omitted to avoid repetition, as is often done. In either case the ultimate ancestor is mentioned as 'Uthmān Thaqafī, *i.e.* of the tribe to which 'Imād-ud-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Qāsim himself belonged. Again, there is an equally close resemblance between the title of the ancestor, Mūsa, and that of the descendant, Ismā'il. Mūsa, the first Qādī of Alor, was called *Sadr-i-Imāmia al-Ajall al-'Ālim Burhān-ul-Millat-wad-Dīn* and the contemporary of the translator, *viz.*, Ismā'il, was known as *Maulānā Qādī al-Imām al-Ajall al-'Ālim al-Bārī Kamāl-ul-Millat-wad-Dīn*. It is indeed amazing that the translator does not take notice of this similarity of titles and the identity of ancestry brought out above. These, in my opinion, are enough to establish the authenticity of the work beyond doubt. Furthermore, there is very little modern interpolation in it. The anachronisms that crop up here and there ought to be attributed to the author rather than to the translator. Elphinstone's opinion that "it professes to be a translation," which implies a doubt about its genuineness, is evidently wrong. It is denounced by Elliot who says, "An air of truth pervades the whole and though it reads more like a romance than a history yet this is occasioned more by the intrinsic interest of the subject than by any fictions proceeding from the imagination of the author."¹ According to him, the only two stories which appear to be fictitious are the accusation of Jaisiya son of Dāhir by Darohar's sister named Jānki,² and the retaliation of Rāja Dāhir's two virgin daughters.³ Another story which has been taken to be equally fictitious is that of Dāhir's marriage with his own sister.⁴

PROBABILITIES OF THE STORY

THE antiquity and the authenticity of the work proved, it remains to test the correctness of the story of 'Imād-ud-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Qāsim's dismissal and death as told in it. Though 'novel,' as Elliot calls it, there

1. *E. & D.*, pp. 134-35.

2. *Ibid.* p. 136.

3. The theme of this paper.

4. As it was prognosticated that the husband of Dāhir's sister would be the king of Hind and Sind Dāhir married his own sister. (*E. & D.*, Vol. I, p. 154; *Studies in Indo-Muslim History*, 82-83).

is nothing improbable in it were it not for some serious contradictions which it contains. The whim of the Khalifa, the motive of the virgin girls, and the mode of inflicting punishment are all within the range of probability, particularly when we consider the wiles practised by women for the purpose of wreaking vengeance, the unrestrained autocracy of the Umayyads, their uncontrolled ambition to rule, their unswerving strictness in exacting obedience, and their unfailing ingenuity in inventing novel modes of inflicting punishment. The objection that the sewing up of a human being in a cow-skin was a Tartar and not an Arab mode of punishment does not carry weight because, apart from the fact that we have an earlier instance of a similar punishment being inflicted in the annals of Arab history,¹ the Umayyads could and did actually hit upon worse and more appalling types of punishment.²

IMPROBABILITIES

YET notwithstanding the apparent probabilities of the story, referred to above, there are a number of inherent discrepancies, chronological errors, and contradictions which knock the bottom out of it. According to the *Chach-Nâma*, "Muhammad son of 'Ali Abû-Hasan Hamadâni says that when Râi Dâhir was killed, his two virgin daughters were seized in his palace and Muhammad (ibn) Qâsim had sent them to Baghdâd under the care of his negro slaves."³ In the same account (*Chach-Nâma*) we read that Muhammad ibn Qâsim exhorted his soldiers against Har Râi Chandar at Udhâfar in these words:—"Today we have come to encounter this cursed infidel,"⁴ and a little further we read, "The next day . . . a dromedary rider with orders from the seat of Government arrived."⁵ This clearly shows that Muhammad ibn Qâsim received the Khalifa's orders after the conquest of Multân, when he was contemplating the conquest of Kannauj. Now the author of the *Chach-Nâma* says, "The accursed Dâhir was slain at the fort of Râwar at sunset on Thursday, the 10th of Ramadân, 93 A.H. (712 A.D.)"⁶ and we know for

1. The followers of the first Mu'âwiya enclosed the body of Muhammad ibn Abû-Bakr, the Governor of Egypt, in the carcass of an ass and burnt both to ashes even before the Arab conquest of Sind. (See *E. & D.*, Vol. I, p. 4439: *Tabari* (Persian), 592; *Ibn-i-Khaldûn* (*Urdû*), II, V, 392; and *Raudat-as-Şâfâ*, II, 312.

2. Almost exactly similar treatment was meted out to Musa, the Governor of Spain, by the same relentless Khalifa, Sulaimân. While Mûsa was lingering in misery and exile at Mecca the head of his son, who had been murdered at Cordova, was thrown down at his (father's) feet and the tyrant's messenger taunted him in the midst of his agony and despair. (Gibbon, Chap. LI; see also an account of the Tragedy of Karbela in any original Arabic history).

3. See *supra*, p. 2.

4. *E. & D.*, Vol. I, p. 208.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 209.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 170.

certain that Muhammad ibn Qāsim received the fatal orders at Udhāfar in 96 A.H.¹ This undue delay in the infliction of punishment extending over a period of several years, during which many a letter was sent to and received from Hajjāj by Muhammad ibn Qāsim, is not accounted for. If as alleged by Muhammad, son of Abul-Hasan Hamadānī, Muhammad ibn Qāsim seized the daughters of Dāhir after his death and sent them to the Khalifa, they must have reached the capital within two months at the most; and if, as alleged, the Khalifa called them to his bed-chamber after "some day" and learnt that Muhammad ibn Qāsim had deflowered them both before sending them on to the capital and passed the death sentence then and there; the orders must have reached the unfortunate victim within six months and not several years after the death of Dāhir and his daughters' departure from Rāwar,² for we are told that when Muhammad ibn Qāsim conveyed the request of the people of Brahmanābād for the repair of the Budh Temple to Hajjāj he received a reply 'after some days' and not after some months or years. This is enough to rob the story of its time-honoured charm and romance. Besides this, there are a number of other points which militate against it: while dwelling upon the capture of Rāwar, the author of the *Chach-Nāma* says that Muhammad ibn Qāsim captured a large number of prisoners and enormous booty, which he sent to the Khalifa through his uncle, Hajjāj, along with Dāhir's head.³ The same authority informs us that a daughter of Dāhir's sister was among the prisoners and that the Khalifa became enamoured of her when he saw her, but gave her away in marriage to 'Abdullāh

1. See *supra*. It may be pointed out here that the chronology of the *Chach-Nāma* is hopelessly lawless and inconsistent. The 10th of Ramadān 93 A.H. (the 20th of June, 712 A.D.) was Monday, the same date of the year 92 A.H. (1.7.711) was Wednesday, and the same date of the Rūyyat year 92 (2.7.711) was Thursday. The week day (Thursday) supplies the clue to the correct date - 10th of Ramadān, 92 A.H. Dāhir is said to have been killed at the fort of Rāwar on Thursday, the 10th of Ramadān, 93 A.H. (*supra*). It then took 'Imād-ud-Dīn Muhammad ibn Qāsim some time to take Rāwar, and the conquest of Dhalila and Baghrūr (two fortresses) also took him two months each. But we are told (*E. & D.*, I, 177) that he laid seige to Brahmanābād in Rajab, 93 A.H. and that it fell some six months later on the last day of Dhil-Hij, 93 A.H. All this is evidently incorrect and inextricably involved. The only criterion or method of ascertaining the correct chronology is perhaps the application of the week-day test. (See *S.I-M.H.*, 93). It is also said that the young hero left Brahmanābād on Thursday, the 3rd of Muharram, 94 A.H. (*supra*). Now the 3rd of Muharram, 94 A.H. (9-10-712) was Sunday and the 3rd of Muharram, 95 (Rūyyat) corresponded to the 28th of September, 713 which was Thursday. Again if the week-day is correct, the correct year must be 95 A.H. 'Imād-ud-Dīn Muhammad was recalled from Sind and put to death after the death of Walid in Jamādī I, 96 A.H., and the 3rd of Muharram, 95 A.H., fits in fairly well, for it would leave him about eighteen months for subsequent operations against Alor (or Ad-Daur or Ar-Rūz), Sikka and Multān. (*S.I-M.H.*, 96). This would evidently increase the interval by one year and thus make room for more communications between him and the Central authorities.

2. Rāwar was founded by Chach (*E. & D.*, I, 154) at some distance from Brahmanābād. The passage at page 154 (*Ibid.*) shows that it was in Middle Sind, of but references at pp. 167, 170, 171 and 174 (*Ibid.*) show that it was somewhere south of Brahmanābād and north of Nirūn (Hādrābād). See *S.I-M.H.*, 87.

3. *E. & D.*, Vol. I, pp. 172-73.

ibn 'Abbás who sought her hand.¹ Why Muḥammad ibn Qāsim sent Dāhir's daughters direct to the Khalifa, if he really did so, and the rest of the prisoners to Ḥajjāj, is not explained. Again, Muḥammad ibn Qāsim was appointed Governor of Sind by Ḥajjāj and it was to Ḥajjāj that he was responsible for his acts. The correspondence that passed between the two testifies to this fact. Normally Muḥammad ibn Qāsim should have sent the prisoners, etc. to Ḥajjāj. In fact, if he had not done so, he would have incurred the wrath of his 'ferocious' uncle. The author, moreover, does not say anything about the two daughters of Dāhir in connection with the capture of Rāwar, but reproduces the romantic story on the authority of Muḥammad ibn Abul-Hasan at the end of his account. It is evident from this omission that he himself entertained serious doubts about the genuineness of the story, otherwise he would have put it in its proper place. Elsewhere in his account he says that after the conquest of Brahmanābād, Dāhir's wife and two maiden daughters were captured,² but he does not give their names, age, and other details. Supposing that this is an inadvertent omission, supposing also that the girls referred to here were the same who figure in the romantic story, Muḥammad ibn Qāsim would have, even then, received the orders much earlier than he actually did, for an interval of at least three years intervened between the capture of Brahmanābād in 93 A.H. and the receipt of the fatal orders in 96 A.H.³ According to the author of the *Chach-Nāma*, Muḥammad ibn Qāsim captured or purchased Rānī Lādī, wife of Rāja Dāhir, and contracted his Nikāh with her.⁴ He was then in the prime of life and would not have preferred her to the two virgin daughters of Dāhir, if they had really fallen into his hands, for the Khalifa was entitled to nothing more than 1/5th of the spoils of war and he could easily marry one if not both of the girls. It is said that the girls were first kept by the Khalifa in his harem for some days, and when one night they were taken into his presence, he fell in love with the elder sister when he saw her for the first time.⁵ It is a question whether the Khalifa did not see them when they were first taken to him, and whether he did not see them thereafter for so many days during their stay in his harem. The daughters of a Rāja, if nothing else, must have attracted his immediate attention if the tale were true. Again, when they were taken to the bed-chamber of the Khalifa, the latter employed the services of an interpreter.⁶ Evidently he did not know their language and they did not know his. How, it may then be asked, did he follow the elder sister when she addressed him three times in an insulting and taunting tone for a considerable length of time. It is equally difficult to imagine how the Khalifa would enact the love scene depicted in the story in the

1. *E. & D.*, Vol. I, p. 173.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 181.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 177.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 181 and 192.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 209.

6. *Ibid.*

presence of the interpreter, even if the latter were a woman. Moreover, when the chest was opened in the presence of the girls, the Khalifa exclaimed "See, my daughters."¹ What a strange remark ! Who is the Jankī referred to in the penultimate paragraph ? The reference is obviously to the elder girl, but nowhere else is she so called. On the other hand, we are told in the same account that Jānkī was the sister of Darohar Rāī of Kūraj,² when her love was not reciprocated by Jaisiya, son of Dāhir, unsuccessfully plotted against his life.³ In the heading of the same paragraph the name of the Khalifa is given as 'Abdul-Malik son of Marwān, who was dead, and not Walid son of 'Abdul-Malik, the ruling Khalifa. The author says nothing about what happened during the interval between the issue of the Khalifa's orders against Muhammad ibn Qāsim and the arrival of his dead body wrapped in a cow-skin. Even if the story were accepted as correct, it is difficult to say why Muhammad ibn Qāsim did not try to save his life by disobeying the orders of the Khalifa. He was innocent and he knew it. Why did he not try to establish his innocence ? He was the master of Sind and was extremely popular with the people of that place. He could, following the accepted usage of the time, have defied the central authority and set up an independent kingdom. All these are serious flaws calculated to shake the story to its foundations. Finally, it is not supported by any contemporary historian of Arabia or Persia or Sind. We cannot therefore but call it a fabrication.

STORY IN THE *TĀRĪKH-I-MA'SŪMI*.

I now turn to the story as narrated in the *Tārīkh-i-Ma'sūmī*. The question of establishing the antiquity or authenticity of this book need not detain us, because its chapter on the Arab conquest of Sind is a professed abridgement of the *Chach-Nāma*.⁴ The story as told in it is as follows :—At that time a letter came from Khalif Walid, to this effect:— 'After taking Alor, you sent to the capital, among the prisoners, two daughters of Rāja Dāhir, in charge of Muhammad, the son of 'Ali Tuhmān Hamadānī, accompanied by Abyssinian servants. One night the Khalif had the two girls brought into his harem, and he then gave them into the charge of the bed-chamber attendants, with orders to pay them every attention, and present them when they had recovered from the fatigues of their journey. Two months afterwards the Khalif remembered these two Hindi slaves, and ordered them to be brought into his presence. An interpreter accordingly summoned them. When their veils were thrown back, the Khalif, on seeing them, became distracted with admi-

1. See *supra*.

2. In some MSS. this is written as Kiraj. (*E. & D.*, I, 189). I have not been able to identify it.

3. *E. & D.*, Vol. I, pp. 197-201.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 213.

ration for their great beauty. He asked them their names ; one said her name was Parmal-Devī, the other said her name was Sūraj-Devī. The Khalif ordered the attendants to leave one of them there. She then rose and said : ' I am not fit for the bed-chamber of the Khalif, because Muhammad ibn Qāsim dishonoured us both before he sent us to the Khalif. When the interpreter explained this, the fire of anger and jealousy was kindled in the Khalif, and he gave orders that as a punishment for this want of respect, Muhammad ibn Qāsim should be wrapped up in the raw hide of an ox, and be sent to the capital. To enforce this order, the Khalif wrote some words of menace in the margin of the letter in his own hand, 'Wherever Muhammad ibn Qāsim may be, when this reaches him, he is to come to the capital, and let him not fail to obey this order.' Muhammad ibn Qāsim was at Udhapūr¹ when the Khalif's chamberlain brought this mandate. When he had read it, he directed the officer to carry the order into effect. He accordingly wrapped Muhammad ibn Qāsim in a raw hide. Three days afterwards the bird of life left his body and flew to heaven. The chamberlain put the body into a box, and carried it to the capital. When he arrived in Syria, he brought the box before the Khalif on a day of public audience. The Khalif enquired if Muhammad ibn Qāsim were alive ? The chamberlain replied that he had been enclosed in a raw skin, and that he died three days afterwards. The Khalifa then directed the box to be taken into the female apartments, and ordered that it should be opened there in his presence. He then called for the daughters of Rāja Dāhir, and said, ' Come and see how supreme are my commands ; behold Muhammad ibn Qāsim ! ' They both came forward to look at him and recognised him, and, raising their hands, they blessed and praised the Khalif. They then said, ' Kings of great justice should not proceed hastily in perilous matters, nor act precipitately upon the information of friends or enemies in the most important of all concerns.' When the Khalif enquired what was the meaning of their address, they replied : ' We raised this charge against Muhammad ibn Qāsim out of enmity to him because he slew our father, and through him dominion and wealth have departed from our house ; we have come as prisoners into a foreign land ; the king in his anger did not weigh our words, nor distinguish between our truth and our falsehood, but issued his fatal order. The truth is, this man was to us as a father, or a brother ; his hands never touched the skirts of our purity ; our object was to revenge our father, and so we made this accusation. Our wishes have been fulfilled, but there has been a serious failure in the king's justice.' When the Khalif heard this, he was overwhelmed with remorse for a whole hour ; but the fire of anger then burst from the furnace of his bosom, and he gave orders for the two girls to be tied to the tails of horses, and, after being dragged round the city, to be thrown into the Tigris (Dijla). Muhammad ibn Qāsim was buried at Damascus. Two years after his death the people of India rebelled and threw off

1. Vide *Ibid.*, p. 210, where it is written as Udhāfar.

their yoke, and only the country from Debalpur to the Salt Sea remained under the dominions of the Khalif."¹

CRITICISM OF THE PASSAGE

A perusal of the above passage side by side with the passage in the *Chach-Nāma* shows that the main theme of the story is the same. Both the accounts hold the Khalifa Walid ibn 'Abdul-Malik responsible for the dismissal and death of Muhammad ibn Qāsim ; both repeat the allegations of the girls ; both accuse the Khalifa of his failure to find out the truth ; both depict him as a man of low morals ; both say that the girls resorted to that ruse in order to bring about the death of Muhammad ibn Qāsim and thus to avenge the ruin of their family ; both agree in saying that the hero of Sind suffered himself to be sewn up in a cow-skin in blind obedience to the orders of the Khalifa and accuse him of a lack of common-sense ; and both state that he received the fatal orders at Udhāfar. But the details are quite different and full of discrepancies. As has already been remarked, the story in the *Tārīkh-i-Ma'sūmī* is based on that given in the *Chach-Nāma* and the author of the former work has tried to remove the defects of the latter. This accounts for the discrepancies and difference of details. In the *Chach-Nāma* it is mentioned that the girls were sent to the capital after the death of their father (Dāhir) and the capture of Rāwar, but Mir Ma'sūm says that they were sent after the conquest of Alor. While the author of the older work informs us that the girls were sent to the Khalifa under the care of Abyssinian servants, the writer of the latter work gives the name (Muhammad) of the officer in whose custody they were sent to the capital. While the former says that the Khalifa saw the girls 'a few days' after they had been sent to his harem, the latter says that he saw them 'two months' after that. Both the writers depict the Khalifa as devoid of Islamic morality and justice, but Mir Ma'sūm is more careful and paints him in less lurid colours. According to the *Chach-Nāma* the Khalifa wrote the orders against Muhammad ibn Qāsim with his own hand, but Mir Ma'sūm says that 'he wrote some words of menace in the margin of the letter in his own hand.' As regards the punishment inflicted on the girls for their treachery, the author of the *Chach-Nāma* says that they were enclosed between walls and that of the *Tārīkh-i-Ma'sūmī* says that they were tied to the tails of horses and, after being dragged round the city, thrown into the Tigris. What is the source of Mir Muhammad Ma'sūm in these divergent details, we are not informed. Evidently, the story told in this book too cannot be relied upon. It is, in fact, more open to question than its parent source.

STORY TOLD IN THE *FUTŪH-UL-BULDĀN*

Let us now turn to the rival account which is given in the *Futūh-ul-*

1. E. & D., Vol. I, pp. 237-38.

Buldān. It reads as follows :—

“ Meanwhile, Walid, son of ‘Abdul Malik, died and was succeeded by (his brother) Sulaimān who appointed Sālih, son of ‘Abdur-Rahmān, to collect the tribute of ‘Irāq. Yazid, son of Abū-Kabshā-as-Šaksaki, was made governor of Sind, and Muhammad son of Qāsim, was sent back a prisoner with Mu‘āwiya son of Muhallab. The people of Hind wept for Muhammad and preserved his likeness at Kiraj. He was imprisoned by Sālih at Wāsit. Sālih put him to torture, together with other persons of the family of Abū-Uqail, until they expired : for Hajjāj (Muhammad’s uncle) had put to death Ādam, Sālih’s brother, who professed the creed of the Khārijis.”¹

ANTIQUITY OF *FUTŪH-UL-BULDĀN*

A FEW words must first be said about the antiquity as well as authenticity of the book *Futūh-ul-Buldān*, in which the above passage appears. It is admittedly one of the earliest Arabic histories that have come down to us. Its author, Ahmad ibn Yahya ibn Jābir surnamed Abū-Ja‘far and Abul-Hasan and popularly known as Balādhurī on account of his addiction to Baladhar or Malacca been an intoxicating electuary, lived in the middle of the 9th century of the Christian era. He died in 279 A.H. (892-93 A.D.), leaving behind a large as well as a small edition of the *Futūh-ul-Buldān*. The celebrated historian, Tabarī, omits much that our author has recorded. Evidently he was his predecessor. He seems to have been a close contemporary of the author of the *Chūc-i-Nāma*, though there is no evidence to show that either knew the other. Balādhurī brings down the history of events to the end of the reign of al-Mu‘taṣim-Billāh (227-842). Wāqidi, who has drawn upon him, wrote a *Book of Conquests* and among them was a *Conquest of Sind*, which Dr. Sprenger says he has seen quoted by Nuwairī at folio 103 of the large copy of Leyden. Copies of his other *Futūh* or Conquests are very common, but “ *Conquest of Sind* ” or *Futūh-us-Sind* is extremely rare. Al-Ḥusain ibn Yazid aş-Širāfi is another author of Indian history quoted by Nuwairī at folio 795. We also find some other writers on Sindian invasions quoted as existing at the early period of the Arabian conquests.²

AUTHENTICITY

THE authenticity of the book (*Futūh-ul-Buldān*) is also equally undoubted. Balādhurī does not appear to have seen Sind personally, yet his account is based on the information received from other reliable authors

1. E. & D., 124.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 113-15.

whom he frequently quotes. He had 'verbal communications' with Abul-Hasan 'Alī ibn Muhammad al-Madā'inī, who left behind the work *Al-Maghāzi-was-Siyar* or 'Wars and Marches' as a monument to his memory. This book contains an account of Muslim expeditions against Khurāsān and the Indus. Mānsūr ibn Hātim is another author of Sindian history with whom Balādhurī had personal intercourse. He also quotes Ibn-ul-Kalbī as an authority. He wrote and translated many books and was a good poet. He is frequently cited by Ibn-Hauqal, Al-Mas'ūdī, and other ancient geographers, but his historical work is not so frequently quoted. Qudāma, who wrote at Baghdad about the end of the 3rd century A.H., gives an extract from it,¹ and Ibn-ul-Athīr draws upon it under the years 89 and 95 A.H.

CRITICISM

The story as told in the *Futūh-ul-Buldān* is quite simple and is shorn of all the romantic element which dominates the rival account in the *Chach-Nāma* and the *Tārikh-i-Ma'sūmī*. I have no adverse criticism to make against it. There is ample evidence to show that Hajjāj, the uncle of Muhammad ibn Qāsim, had espoused the cause of Walīd's son, 'Abdur-Rāhmān, against his brother Sulaimān, and had executed and imprisoned a large number of persons and thus excited hostilities against himself everywhere. When, therefore, Sulaimān succeeded in winning the Khilāfat in 96 A.H. (715 A.D.) he wreaked vengeance on all those who had opposed his father's covenant, according to which he had to succeed his brother, Walīd, and on their relatives and friends. But for the fact that Hajjāj had died six months prior to Sulaimān's succession,² his fate too would have been sealed. His friends and relatives had to pay a heavy price for his policy of persecution. The new Khalifa's hand fell heavily on them; and the enemies of Hajjāj, now set at liberty by the new Khalifa, had their day. Muhammad ibn Qāsim was recalled from Sind and brought back as a captive by Mu'āwiya; and his place was taken by a favourite of the ruling Khalifa. Shālih, the newly appointed Governor of Iraq, who bore bitter enmity to Hajjāj because the latter had executed the former's brother Ādam on a charge of heresy, shut him in a prison at Wāsiṭ and tortured him to death along with all the surviving members of his family to avenge the execution of Ādam.³

1. Qudāmah-ibn-Ja'far was a pupil of Balādhurī, and in his كتاب المراجع gives a chapter on conquests. The unique fragments of Qudāmah's كتاب المراجع, preserved at Istanbul fortunately contains this chapter. It is a *verbatim* copy of Balādhurī's account, though somewhat abridged. Hence it is no wonder if there is no difference whatever between Qudāmah, an! Balādhurī on this point.—*Ed.*, I. C.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 114-15.

3. Vide E. & D., Vol I, p. 124; and *Raudat-us-Safā*, III, 106.

CONCLUSION

THE above account is confirmed by all the contemporary historians.¹ It is free from contradictions and conflicting statements and hence appeals to reason more than the rival account. The rise of Sulaimān synchronised with the sad end of Muḥammad ibn Qāsim² and hence it confirms my conviction about the correctness of the account given in the *Futūh-ul-Buldān*.

S. M. JAFFAR.

1. *Tārikh-i-Tabārī* (Persian), IV, 697; and *Rauḍat-uṣ-Ṣafā*, III, 105.

2. *Ibid.*, 696